



ONTARIO CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S CENTRE

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Dear

We wish to thank you for your centre's participation in the Ministry of Education Evaluation Study. We appreciate the support and time which your staff has given to this first comprehensive study of symbol communication. We enjoyed having the opportunity of visiting your centre and interviewing each symbol instructor. The material obtained through the sub-population will provide more detailed information which will complement the data from the total population.

The returns have been most encouraging. To date, we have complete records on 103 children in different settings and with different learning abilities. Additional data will soon be processed which will allow us to describe a more extensive symbol population.

One section of the study which is nearly completed is that of the parent questionnaire. We are enclosing a short summary of the results obtained through this questionnaire.

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We know that your staff's support was instrumental in securing the large number of returns; 84 of 108 questionnaires were completed.

We are presently involved in the recording and analysis of data collected over the past year. We are developing the structure for the Handbook which will document the symbol programmes participating in the Evaluation Study and will provide practical information to instructors, administrators and parents. To ensure the usefulness of the material included in the Handbook, we are dependent upon the feed-back and evaluation of experienced symbol instructors. With this in mind, it is important for us to confirm the attendance at the Advanced Symbol Workshop of the participants in the Evaluation Study. We would appreciate the enclosed form being completed and returned to us by March 12th, 1976.

The workshop will be held May 12-14th, 1976, at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre. A major focus of the three days will be to review the research findings and assess their relevance for the Handbook.

There will be no fee charged for research instructors, however the workshop will be open to experienced symbol instructors not participating in the research study. For these attendants the fee will be \$75.00 and separate application forms will be sent out at a later date.

Again, may we express our appreciation for the involvement of your setting in this Evaluation Study. We hope that each research instructor will be able to attend the workshop. Your Centre's knowledge and experience can make a valuable contribution to the selection and presentation of findings.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kates

Shirley McNaughton

Co-Directors
Symbol Communication Programme
Educational Evaluation Study

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE - PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

(Researched and compiled by Paula Ashmead)

Findings are based on the returns of the parents of 84 children who are residing at home. The total number of questionnaires distributed was 108. The population consists of 22 children (26.2%) in American educational settings and 62 (73.8%) in Canadian educational settings. 86.9% of the population is within the age range 6-14 years. Over half the parents (58.3%) state that their children are using symbols as a substitute for speech; 32 (38.1%) consider it as supplementing another communication mode, such as verbalization or gesturing.

The population is comprised of diverse ethnic groups:

	English only	French	Spanish/ Portuguese	Italian	Polish/ Yugoslavian
Freq.	58	13	2	5	2
% of Pop.	69.0	15.5	2.4	6.0	2.4

	Chinese	German	Indian	Greek
Freq.	1	1	1	1
% of Pop.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2

Of those speaking a language other than English (26), 22 (84.6%) indicate their children understand the foreign language; 15 (57.6%) state this language to be not available on the child's board.

In most cases, parents first learned of symbols when symbols were recommended for their child. 44% stated that they first learned of symbols through the treatment centre; 41.7% indicated it was through the child's school; 19% stated that it was through the speech therapist.

In a section related to where parents obtained information pertaining to their child's potential, the following results were found: with regard to physical prognosis, 85.7% received the information from the doctor; with regard to speech, 57.1% received the information from the speech therapist; with regard to education, as many parents (36.9%) received the

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information from doctors as from teachers. Information about their own child's education was provided through direct observation in classroom visits, parent-school meetings and written information from the school.

63.1% of all respondents noted a change in their family situation since the introduction of symbols. Parents stated that their child was easier to understand and to communicate with and that there was less frustration for both parent and child. Regardless of what information parents had received, or from whom, 61.9% indicated a desire for more information, and training, notably in instruction in symbol usage; and many expressed the generalized desire for updating, with some specifying the area of materials and resources.

